

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023*

**Remarks to Members of the Press With President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine in Kyiv, Ukraine**

*February 20, 2023*

*President Zelenskyy.* Mr. President, fellow ladies and gentlemen, journalists and everyone in this room, the team of President Biden: I'm very happy to welcome you in Ukraine. It is a great honor for me and for all of us.

We have just had negotiations with the President of the United States in the vis-a-vis format, and then we had a wide discussion with the involvement of our teams. These conversations brings us closer to the victory.

And we hope that this year, the 2023, will become a year of victory. This unprovoked and criminal Russia's war against Ukraine and against the whole world and democratic world has to end with liberating the whole of Ukraine's territory from Russia's occupation and the solid guarantees of the long-term security for our country as well as the Europe and the whole world.

Right now, in Ukraine, the destiny of the international order based on international order is decided. And we, together with President Biden and our allies and partners, have to continue doing everything possible so that the democratic world would win in this historic fight.

Ukrainian remember the focus, the attention, the attitude of President Biden and United States to every single Ukrainian, to Ukraine. We remain constantly in communication with the President of United States over the course of this large-scale war. And this is the first visit over 15 years. And this is really the most important visit of the whole history of Ukraine-U.S. relationship.

This is the visit in this most difficult period for Ukraine when Ukraine is fighting for our own liberty, for the liberties of the world. And this underlines the results that we have already achieved and what sort of historic achievements we might gain altogether with the whole world, with the United States, with the Europe. And today our negotiations were very fruitful. We've—they were very important and crucial.

And as has become traditional in relationship between our countries, I would like to extend words of gratitude personally to Mr. President Biden and to his team, to the Congress, to all the U.S. people. And I thank you for this level of Ukraine-U.S. cooperation.

And this week, we'll be marking a 1 year of our fight against the Russia's aggression, so it's very symbolic that we solidify our resilience through two meetings with the President of Ukraine, my visit in December and the visit of the Mr. President of the United States to Kyiv today. The results of these visits will surely be seen and will surely have a reflection on the battlefield and in liberating our territories.

The decision of the United States on Abrams tanks for Ukraine has already presented a foundation for establishing a tank coalition. And it's of historic importance in many other aspects, more specifically in air defense, in Patriots for the defense of our cities. Now, this is a very fundamental and crucial reinforcement of our capacities.

We've also talked about long-range weapons and the weapons that may still be supplied to Ukraine, even though it wasn't supplied before. The—I know, Mr. President, that there will be a very significant package of security support to Ukraine. And currently, it will serve as a clear signal that Russia's attempts of revanche will have no chance and that we will together defend our cities and citizens from Russia's—[inaudible]—will have more impetus towards our victory.

And today we have yet again underlined that we have our common vision with regards to the perspectives of this war. We have coordinated the follow-on pressure on the terrorist state. We are working hard on the reinforcement of sanctions, both bilaterally and in the form of G-7, which is very important.

We have common vision on the contents of many aspects of our peace formula, because it's security elements, as well as the tasks to restore the U.N. Charter to its full capacity and to defend the international rule-based order; that's a common, a joint task for all the countries that are interested in the international security.

The rebuilding and the recovery of justice is also very important for all those who was affected by the Russian terror, by the Russian war. And the aggressor has to take responsibility for the aggression and to reimburse all the damages.

I thank to the President of United States for supporting our work on restoring the justice more specifically in the work of our—all of our institutions in that area. And we believe there's no alternatives to the establishment of the special tribunal. This is the position of the United—of Ukraine, and we shall support this position.

And I would really like the United States to be engaged in the implementation of our peace formula, because its implementation would mean a reinforcement of global stability and the predictability of international relations. And we have some achievements in this area.

Already this week, in New York, together with the United States of America and over 60 other countries will be submitting for the consideration of the U.N. General Assembly—of the draft resolution on supporting peace in Ukraine. And on the eve of the 24th of February, we believe that the approval of this resolution would be very significant evidence to the fact that the terrorist state would never break a civilized country.

And I think we are also opening a special tablet dedicated to the President Biden. The first call in the night of the 24th of February took place with the United States, and since that time, we had conversations and with very significant attention to our fight, to the protection of Ukraine's democracy.

Besides, there is the personal contribution in the President Biden in solidified the liberty and democracy in the world. This will be remembered eternally. And Ukraine is grateful to you, Mr. President, to all the U.S. citizens, to all those who cherish freedom just as we cherish them.

Glory to our warriors, glory to our allies, and glory to Ukraine.

*President Biden.* Well, thank you very much, Mr. President.

You know, it was 1 year ago this week that we spoke on the telephone, Mr. President. It was very late at night in Washington, very early in the morning here in Kyiv. Russian planes were in the air, and tanks were rolling across your border. You told me that you could hear the explosions in the background. I'll never forget that. And the world was about to change.

I remember it vividly, because I asked you—I asked you next—I asked you: "What is there, Mr. President? What can I do for you? How can I be of help?" And I don't know whether you remember what you said to me, but you said, and I quote: "Gather the leaders of the world. Ask them to support Ukraine." Gather the leaders of the world and ask them to support Ukraine.

And you said that you didn't know when we'd be able to speak again. That dark night, 1 year ago, the world was literally, at the time, bracing for the fall of Kyiv—it seems like a lot longer ago than a year, but think back to that year—perhaps even the end of Ukraine.

You know, 1 year later, Kyiv stands and Ukraine stands. Democracy stands. The Americans stand with you, and the world stands with you.

Kyiv has captured a part of my heart, I must say. And I've come here six times as Vice President, once as President. And in 2009, as Vice President, when I first came here. Then back in 2014, I came three times in the aftermath of the Revolution of Dignity. And I again came in 2015 to address the Rada about the work of building a strong democracy. And I came in 2017, just before I left office as Vice President.

I knew I'd be back, but I wanted to be sure. Even though we'd—the election were over, Barack and I were out of office, I decided to make one more trip, before the next President was sworn in, to Kyiv.

So, President Zelenskyy, you deeply honor me here in Kyiv with you today to meet with your military, your intelligence folks, your diplomatic teams, community leaders who have stepped up and—to help their country in their hour of need.

It's astounding who stood up. Everybody. Everybody—women, young children—trying to do something. Just trying to do something. Pulling people out of apartments that are being shelled and, literally, what I think is a war crimes. It's astounding. And the whole world—the whole world—sees it and looks at it.

This is the largest land war in Europe in three-quarters of a century, and you're succeeding against all and every expectation, except your own. We have every confidence that you're going to continue to prevail.

You know, from the moment I first received the intelligence report in the fall, about a year ago, we were focused on determining: How do we rally the rest of the world? How do I help you with the promise you asked me to make to rally the world?

Well, how do you succeed? How do you ever get a world to respond to a prosperous economy, a confident democracy, a secure and independent state?

When united Americans of all political backgrounds decided that they would step up, the American people know it matters. Unchecked aggression is a threat to all of us.

We built a coalition of nations, from the Atlantic to the Pacific: NATO to the Atlantic—in the Atlantic; Japan in the Pacific. I mean, across the—across the world, the number of nations stood up—over 50—to help Ukraine defend itself with unprecedented military, economic, and humanitarian support. We united the leading economies of the world to impose unprecedented cost that are squeezing Russia's economic lifelines.

Together, we've committed nearly 700 tanks and thousands of armored vehicles, 1,000 artillery systems, more than 2 million rounds of artillery ammunition, more than 50 advanced launch rocket systems, antiship and air defense systems, all defend—to defend Ukraine. And that doesn't count the other half a billion dollars we're going to be—we're announcing with you today and tomorrow that's going to be coming your way. And that's just the United States, in this piece.

And just today that announcement includes artillery ammunition for HIMARS and howitzers, more Javelins, anti-armor systems, air surveillance radars that will protect Ukrainian people from aerial bombardments.

Later this week, we will announce additional sanctions against elites and companies that are trying to evade sanctions and backfill Russia's war machine.

And thanks to a bipartisan support in Congress, this week we're delivering billions in direct budgetary support—billions in direct budgetary support—which the Government can put to use immediately and help provide for basic services of citizens.

The cost that Ukraine has had to bear has been extraordinarily high, and the sacrifices have been far too great. They've been met, but they've been far too great.

We mourn alongside the families of those who have been lost to the brutal and unjust war. We know that there'll be very difficult days and weeks and years ahead.

But Russia's aim was to wipe Ukraine off the map. Putin's war of conquest is failing. Russia's military has lost half its territory it once occupied. Young, talented Russians are fleeing by the tens of thousands, not wanting to come back to Russia. Not fleeing—not just fleeing from the military, fleeing from Russia itself, because they see no future in their country. Russia's economy is now a backwater, isolated and struggling.

Putin thought Ukraine was weak and the West was divided. As you know, Mr. President, I said to you at the beginning, he's counting on us not sticking together. He was counting on the inability to keep NATO united. He was counting on us not to be able to bring in others on the side of Ukraine.

He thought he could outlast us. I don't think he's thinking that right now. God knows what he's thinking, but I don't think he's thinking that. But he's just been plain wrong. Plain wrong.

And, 1 year later, the evidence is right here in this room. We stand here together. Mr. President, I'm delighted to be able to repay your visit to our country.

In Washington, not long ago, you told us, you told the Congress, quote, "We have no fear, nor should anyone in the world have it." End of quote. You and all Ukrainians, Mr. President, remind the world every single day what the meaning of the word "courage" is, from all sectors of your economy, all walks of life. It's astounding. Astounding.

You remind us that freedom is priceless; it's worth fighting for, for as long as it takes. And that's how long we're going to be with you, Mr. President: for as long as it takes.

*[At this point, President Zelenskyy spoke briefly in English as follows.]*

*President Zelenskyy.* We'll do it.

*[President Biden and President Zelenski shook hands.]*

*President Biden.* Thank you, pal.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:55 a.m. at the Mariinsky Palace. In his remarks, he referred to former Presidents Barack Obama and Donald J. Trump; and President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia. He also referred to the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS). President Zelenskyy spoke in Ukrainian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

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